

## LIBYA: RELAPSE IN TO CRISIS AFTER MUAMMAR GADDAFI (SINCE 2011)

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### ABSTRACT

*The world saw a great revolution sparked in Tunisia, anchored in deep rooted political, economic and social factors as well as the emergence of social media networks, ultimately igniting the Arab Revolution of 2011. At the end of the year, three long tenured undemocratic rulers, Ben Ali, Hosni Mubarak, and Muammar Gaddafi were removed from power in Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya respectively. In Libya, a full scale eight months of civil war, the intervention of the international community, the death of a dictator in the Libyan 'February 17 Revolution' of 2011, followed, unlike states in the region that have been in a similar pattern, by long lasting instability which is still unsolved. The UN has been following the case of Libya closely, since the outbreak and its attempt to mediate for peace among different factions in the post-revolution crisis was commendable in the midst of the problem of inclusiveness. Lack of inclusiveness in the establishment of the Government of National Accord in 2015/16 is boosting the current threat of Libya called ISIS/L. Those who were disappointed with the establishment of the government and power division are joining the terrorist groups. So, composition of the new governments should be reconsidered. Factors caused and exacerbated post-Gaddafi Libyan crisis are basically attributed to pre and post-revolution conditions that are related with the legacy of administration of Gaddafi, geographical and ethnic composition of the state, thirsty for power, external actors role or intervention and, most importantly, the weakness of transitional government. The state is failing due to the death of national identity. Fractured state security and deteriorating economy caused civilians either leave their home or live under miserable conditions. Not only the state, the crisis or civil war has been highly affecting the security, socio-economic and political conditions of the broader region. It was this issue, which inspired this work to provide an in-depth analysis on basic factors contributed for the relapse of Libya into security, social, economic and political crises after the death of Gaddafi in 2011. In conclusion, the paper has forwarded the way out for Libya.*

**KEYWORDS:** Civil War, Civilians, International Community & Revolution

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### INTRODUCTION

#### Historical Background of the Issue

The Middle East and Northern Africa (MENA), which is usually considered as the Arab region, characterized by civil war, revolutions, and undemocratic powerful authoritarian regimes. The 44<sup>th</sup> President of the USA, Barack Obama, once mentioned in his remarks on the MENA that these countries won their independence a long time ago, but the people did not (2011). Until the end of the first decade of twenty first century, despite several home works left to be done on sphere of democracy and economy, the large Arab region seemed politically stable, with its decades-long authoritarian regimes firmly holding onto their power, and politically silenced populations striving to live with widespread economic and political malaises.

Everything was changed on December 17, 2010, when a policewoman confiscated the unlicensed

vegetable cart of a twenty-six-year-old street vendor, Mohamed Bouazizi, who was selling fruits and vegetables on the street of small Tunisian city of SidiBouزيد. Humiliated by the abuse and exasperated by the inability to get redress, Bouazizidoused himself with gasoline, and lit himself on fire, the same day. His self-immolation caused the city of SidiBouزيد to rise in public demonstrations. Those demonstrations spread throughout rural Tunisia during the month of December and eventually reached the capital of Tunis during January 2011. Due to the existence of almost related political and economic condition in the region, the movement spread like a wildfire from Tunisia to the Arab countries including Egypt, Libya, and other countries until the entire region was engulfed.

President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, an authoritarian ruler, who had reigned over Tunisia for 23 years, relinquished his rule and boarded an airplane for Saudi Arabia on January 14, 2011. The events in Egypt came to an end on 11 February 2011 when President Mubarak resigned.

Libyans were highly inspired by the recent uprisings unfolded in Tunisia and Egypt. On 14<sup>th</sup> February 2011, only four days after Mubarak stepped down in Egypt, a well-known lawyer and human rights activist, Fathi Turbil, who represented the relatives of more than 1,200 prisoners allegedly massacred by government security forces in Abu Salim jail in Tripoli, was arrested in Benghazi (Martinez, 2011). Triggered by the detention of this human rights activist, Libyans in Benghazi, Libya's second-largest city which has long been a traditional hotbed of opposition against the regime, come to the streets to demand the end of Gaddafi's regime on 15<sup>th</sup> February 2011. Within days, the uprising had spread across the whole of the East and to some parts of the West Libya. Revolution in Libya, which unlike in Tunisia and Egypt, escalated to a full scale civil war and intervened by North Atlantic Treaty Organization (hereinafter NATO), ended when Muammar Gaddafi's 42-year-old regime come to an end with his death on October 20, 2011.

Many have expected the economic and political malaises of Libya will get its end with the change of the regime. "Yet Libya has since [the revolution of 2011] become a failed state in what could be a prolonged period of civil war. Conflicts are occurring at the local, national, and even regional levels" (Engel, 2014:1). Hence, in a dissimilar way to post-revolution situation in Tunisia and Egypt, Libya experienced unintended outcome which turn the state in to instability.

This paper gives emphasis to Libya that relapsed into instability after the revolution and is going to be considered another 'Somalia' in the North Africa. A few days after the death of Gaddafi Libya immersed in to social, political and economic crisis that have been continuing, and the state became a hub of terrorist groups and illicit traffickers in the region. Different groups exercise power over the state. Of which, the major four that are currently in control of Libya's different region are Operation Dignity (Tobruk based government), Operation Dawn (Tripoli based government), Tuaregs and Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham/Levant (ISIS or ISIL).

Lastly, investigating the basic internal and external factors for Libyan entry in to crisis after the revolution in-depth, the paper has provided the way out for Libya.

## **Libya**

Libya is bordered by the Mediterranean Sea to the North, Egypt to the East, Sudan to the South-East, Chad and Niger to the South, and Algeria and Tunisia to the West. With an area of almost 1,800,000 square kilometers, Libya considered as large country in Africa. However, the Sahara desert covers more than 95 percent of the country, and therefore most of it is uninhabitable; more than 90 percent of Libya's six million people live along the Mediterranean coast (CIA, 2011).

Traditionally Libya has been divided into three distinct regions, namely Cyrenaica, Tripolitan, and Fezzan. Separated by the vast area of desert, Cyrenaica (East) has tended to look eastwards to the Mashriq or eastern Islamic world (Egypt) historically, and is known for its tightly preserved tribal structures, its orientation towards Egypt, and its socially and religiously conservative population. Whereas, Tripolitania (West) has looked westward to the Maghrib or western Islamic world (like Tunisia) historically, and has a more modern and cosmopolitan approach to life, oriented towards the Mediterranean. And lastly Fezzan (South/Southwest) has looked south to central and western Africa (Niger and Chad) historically, and is Libya's sparsely populated hinterland, inhabited by the Tuareg, Tebu and their caravans (Pargeter, 2012). These three regions are separated by vast distances, and overland travel between them is even to this day very difficult. The three regions have historically been relatively separate and autonomous. Thus, until the 20th century, the three provinces of Libya shared little common history or physical contact, therefore; for centuries, Libya's history was a story of regions.

Before the coming of European colonial powers in 1911, Libya was a dominion of the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman Empire did not exercise full control of Libya. Indeed the three provinces enjoyed a liberal amount of independence.

In the early 20th century Libya was targeted by the colonial policies of Italy because of the trade route between the Red Sea and the Mediterranean. In 1911, Italy launched a military invasion of Libya in an effort to seize and colonize the Ottoman provinces. The Ottomans surrendered the three provinces to Italy in 1912. By occupying Libya, Italian authorities amalgamated the three provinces under the classical name Libya (which is a Greek phrase for all of North Africa Libya, from a single Berber tribe name) in 1912 (Simons, 2003).

During the Second World War Italy's defeat in North Africa in 1943 led to the Allied occupation of Libya with the British establishing a separate military administration over Cyrenaica and Tripolitania as did the French in Fezzan, due to the region's proximity to French possessions in Algeria and West Africa (Bell & Witter, 2011). Finally, the British plan for an independent Libya under Idris leadership became acceptable by the United Nations. On 24<sup>th</sup> September 1951 the United Kingdom of Libya achieved full independence under the rule of King Idris.

Historical enmities between Cyrenaica and Tripolitania, dominated by their respective capital cities of Benghazi and Tripoli, have grown since independence. Cyrenaica served as the seat of power for the Sanusi monarch King Idris I, who ruled Libya from 1951 to 1969 (Pargeter, 2012).

It is much advantage for Libya when large reserves of high-quality oil were discovered in 1959. This discovery of oil in Cyrenaica by American prospectors rapidly transformed the country's economy and politics. Within a decade, Libya emerged as a major world oil producer, but the newfound wealth intensified the regional divisions. Power and wealth remained concentrated in the hands of the Sanusi monarchy and its tribal allies in Cyrenaica. Rampant corruption and incompetence crippled the central government (Bell & Witter, 2011).

Denouncing king Idris, who was undergoing medical treatment in Turkey, for the social and economic situation in the country among the people and for his alliances with the United States and Britain for Arabs, opposition leaders in Tripolitania started to unify the province against the monarchy. On the 1st of September 1969 the 'Free Officers' carried out a bloodless coup d'état, overthrowing the monarchy and installing 27 year old leader, captain in the Libyan Air Force, Captain Muammer Gaddafi, as the new head of state (Morris, 2012).

As soon as he assumed power, Gaddafi took several measures from shifting the country's political and economic power away from Cyrenaica and westwards to Tripolitania to purging the political, business, and military elites associated with the Sanusi establishment. In the west, Gaddafi built his base of support among the tribes and elite of Tripolitania and Fezzan that had been neglected under Idris (Bell & Witter, 2011). The government of Gaddafi was full of political, economic and social problems (Smits et al, 2013). These grievances of the people triggered by successful revolutions in the neighbor sates, and caused the revolution in 2011.

### **The 'February 17 Revolution' of 2011 In Libya: An Overview**

**Fundamental Causes:** The fundamental causes of the revolution were socio-economic and political problems in the last four decades under Gaddafi, including decades of authoritarianism; political repression; mismanagement; prohibition to other political parties; clientalism; distribution of power based on proximity to Gaddafi; the cult of personality; denial of the fundamental freedom; gender inequality; violation of human rights; dysfunctional nature of the formal political and economic system; corruption; inflation; unequal development of regions; income gap, unemployment; marginalization of the minority tribes and others. The stark contrast between Libya's eastern and western provinces over status, and the strength of the rebellion in Cyrenaica and the relative degree of loyalty to the regime across much of Tripolitania and Fezzan was also at the heart of the revolution

**Immediate Cause:** On 14<sup>th</sup> February 2011, only four days after Mubarak stepped down in Egypt, a well-known lawyer and human rights activist, Fathi Turbil, was arrested in Benghazi. Triggered by the detention of this human rights activist, Libyans in Benghazi come to the streets to demand the end of Gaddafi's regime on 15<sup>th</sup> February 2011. Within days, the uprising had spread across the whole of the East and to some parts of the West Libya.

**Course:** The Libyan revolution began on February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2011, as a consequence of the imprisonment of Fathi Terbil. The next day, Benghazi protest of February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2011 attracted a few hundred Libyans, but online coverage of the events led to additional protests taking place in Bayda and Zentan, much closer to Tripoli (Bell & Witter, 2011). Though the regime maintained a tight control on state controlled media reports, the Qatar-based and widely available Al Jazeera network reported heavily on the protests using citizen-submitted video and helped publicize calls for a countrywide Day of Revolt on February 17<sup>th</sup>, 2011.

On February 17<sup>th</sup>, 2011, hundreds gathered outside the police station in Benghazi and in the cities of Ajdabiya, Darnah and Zintan, and voice their disapproval of Muammar Gaddafi and his regime (Garland, 2012). The response from Gaddafi was quick and brutal.

On February 27, 2011, after ten days of seemingly disorganized protests, the formation of a National Transitional Council (hereinafter NTC) is announced, headed by former minister of Justice, Mustafa Abdul Jalil, who in the preceding week defected from the government in protest over the level of violence used against the protesters.

The protest turned in to a full scale civil war and saw the involvement of international Community after a month. The civil war come to its end almost after eight months of massacres, fights, battles, revolution and conflict when a former Libyan leader Gaddafi was captured while sheltering in a drainage pipe and just in matter of minutes shot to death by Misratan militia-men outside the city of Sirte on October 20, 2011.

**Consequence:** The revolution removed Gaddafi's rule. This was accomplished with a heavy price. Different

bodies forwarded different numbers of deaths and injuries during the revolution, but the majority agreed that at least 30,000 people were killed and 50,000 people wounded as the result of the revolution (Chivvies and Martini, 2014).

Despite initial signs that shows Libya might move toward stability, the country has teetered on the brink of failure with the total collapse of the transition after Gaddafi. The followed socio-economic and political instability in Libya affected not only socio-economic and politics of the state, but it also imposed security, economy and political crisis on North Africa.

### **Major Political Developments in Libya From 2011-2016**

Lack of control on violence within the borders or control of populations and territory as well as not providing a range of public goods are what the attributes of failed states are. Deeply conflicted, dangerous, and contested bitterly by warring faction that lack both domestic and international legitimacy are also their others attributes.

A decisive victory of revolutionary forces in Libya brought optimism among the people for the future. An interim government was immediately established on November 24<sup>th</sup> under Prime Minister Abdul Raheem Al-Keeb and remained in place until elections for the GNC could be held and a new government could be formed (Chivvies and Martini, 2014).

With the purpose of forming a legitimate interim government to manage the transition, Libyan voters cast their votes in the first national elections on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2012. Out of the 200 seats in the GNC, 80 were filled by proportional representation according to each party's share of the vote, and the rest 120 were given to individuals who won direct elections. In the party vote, the National Forces Alliance (NFA), led by the former NTC leader Mahmoud Jibril, routed the Muslim Brotherhood-affiliated Justice and Development Party (hereinafter JDP), which is the Islamists party that only got 17, securing 39 out of 80 seats (Andersen, 2013).

The sense of optimism, however, was soon darkened by the cloud cast of continuing violence and instability due to the inability of NTC and GNC to control arms proliferation and disarm armed gangs and militias. Numerous militias, sub-state groups, and local and military councils asserted peripheral power, bringing into play legitimacy of arms at the expense of the ruling government. The interim governments failed to apply Disarmament, Demobilization, and Rehabilitation (hereinafter DDR) program. The GNCs attempt to incorporate estimated 250,000 militias to the army also failed (Varvelli, 2013). Militias raid institutions symbolizing the state, such as prisons and hospitals, and blockaded government ministries and offices; they even killed and kidnapped whoever they wanted. On September 11, 2012 the U. S. Ambassador to Libya Chris Stevens and three other Americans were killed in Benghazi by jihadists (Pedersen, 2013). Lawlessness in Libya and the failure of the government to ensure security even just within the capital, Tripoli, was shown when the then GNC Prime Minister Ali Zeidan was kidnapped in October 2013 (Blanchard, 2015). Precisely, in 2012 and 2013 terrorist groups like Al-Qaeda in Maghreb Region, Ansar-al Sheria and others of their affiliates gained ground, and are growing stronger in Libya. Militias were roaming free.

The event which transfers the crisis in to a bloody civil war happened in 2013. In May 2013 militia fighters storm government buildings in Tripoli and pressure the GNC, Libya's parliament, to pass the infamous PIL (Degaddafication Law) (Gartenstein-Ross & Barr, 2015). PIL is an act that bans former Gaddafi officials from holding public office or serving in high-level positions in Libyan state institutions for ten years. This is planned by Islamist politicians who were unable to advance their agenda in the GNC due to the majority nature of the secular National Force Alliance and its allies. The law would prevent members of the current government such as Mohamed Magarief, president of the GNC, and Ali Zeidan, the Prime Minister, and Mahmoud Jibril, current leader of the National Forces Alliance (Pedersen, 2013). This PIL

law affects minimum of 500,000 workers directly and 2.5 million people indirectly as averagely five member of a family rely on the income of one person in Libya (Gaub, 2015). Besides, creating the culture of vengeance, their expertise and knowledge of the running of government affects the already paralyzed and weak government.

Amid of growing institutional and security chaos the retired army General KhalifaHaftar appeared on television and call for suspension of the government and the removal of the islamist dominated GNC on 14 February 2014 (Toaldo, 2015). Haftar was a victim of PIL. He had been a war general under Gaddafi and escaped to USA following the defeat of Libya in Chad civil war. Haftar returned home in 2011. He found a large number of supporters which included parts of the old army and the militias. Operation Dignity of Haftar joined by different factions like the Libyan National Army, the Al-Zintan Revolutionaries', the Al-Sa'iqah Forces, Military Council, the Al-Sawa'iq Brigade, the Warfallah Brigade, The Toubou Brigade and others (Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information centre, 2016). This group also comprises victims of PIL and people who fed up with the inability of the government to control Islamist militia. This Haftar's militias launched an offensive against Islamists in and around Benghazi under the name of Operation Dignityon May 16, 2014 (Wehrey, 2014).

In the meantime, the GNC was dissolved and election for the GNC's successor, a House of Representatives (hereinafter HoR), held on June 25, 2014 (Engel, 2014). This election was not only the result of pressure from Operation Dignity, but also public discontent largely directed at the GNC due to security erosion, state's inability to provide basic services to the people, widespread corruption and most importantly the rumor that the parliament is to apply Sheria. Supporters of the Islamists got only about 25 to 30 seats in the 188-member assembly, while candidates close to the secular National Forces Alliance, backed by Operation Dignity, took about 60 (IISS, 2014). "On 4 [<sup>th</sup>]August 2014, at least 22 of the new parliament's 188 members... boycott[ed] when other members decided to convene the HoR in the eastern town of Tobruk, rather than in Benghazi as previously decreed, without a formal handover from the GNC"(ICG, 2015:2). The division became more clear when"[t]he boycotters derided the Tobruk session as illegal, as did GNC elements who seized the opportunity to claim that theirs was still the legitimate parliament"(ibid).

Haftar's lumping together of all Islamists caused the formation of strong coalition against him. This coalition under theislamist GNC government of Tripoli called itself 'Operation Dawn'. The group comprises most of Islamist-leaning militias and Jihadists like Ansar al-Sharia. Later it became a camp that contains the Misrata Brigades, the Al Qa'qa' Brigade, the Tripoli Brigade, the Megraha Brigade, the Libya Revolutionaries Operations Room, Libya Shield Force 1 and others (Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information centre, 2016).

In August 2014, the Dawn coalition succeeded in driving pro-Dignity forces from Tripoli, leaving the capital's airport, which had been the primary base for pro-Dignity forces, in ruins (Lacher, 2015). Upon removing Dignity forces from Tripoli, political forces aligned with the Dawn coalition reconvened the GNC, which had originally been expected to transfer power to the victorious HoR following the June 25 elections (Wehrey, 2014). In response to Tripoli's takeover, the HoR labels Operation Dawn the 'terrorist organizations'.

Since then, Libya has two- warring camps (Federalist and secular 'Operation Dignity' (Karama) and Islamist 'Operation Dawn' (Fajr), two parliaments (the HoR operating from the eastern city of Tobruk and the GNC based in the western city of Tripoli) and two governments (led, respectively, by Prime Minister Abdullah al-Thinni and Prime Minister Omar al-Hasi, who was replaced by Khalifa al-Ghaweilin March 2015) and two armies (Libyan National Army and armed groups from Misrata, Tripoli and other areas) (Wehrey, 2014). Including the UN, countries like France,Britain, United

States, Italy, and Germany has recognized HoR as legitimate Libyan government (U. S. Department of State, 2014). At regional level it was supported by regional states like Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Chad and Niger while unrecognized GNC backed by Qatar, Turkey, and Sudan (ICG, 2015).

The conflict took a dangerous regional turn with the direct military intervention of foreign powers such as United Arab Emirates jets, flown from military bases in Egypt, conduct air strikes against Islamist Dawn forces in Tripoli on August 18, 2014 (Gartenstein-Ross & Barr, 2015). Egypt also did the same to help Operation Dignity's military operation in Benghazi in October (Engel, 2014).

On November 6, 2014, the Libyan Supreme Court, seated in Operation Dawn controlled Tripoli, rules that the June 25 elections were unconstitutional, and formally dissolves HoR (Gartenstein-Ross & Barr, 2015). However, the HoR ignores the ruling citing which the presence of militias, possible intimidation and continues to operate in Tobruk. U. S. Department of State report on 'Situation in Libya' make clear that besides UNSMIL, the United States and its western allies, do not endorse this surprising ruling (2014).

Post 2011 revolution developments in Libya created fertile ground for terrorists to blossom. Though ISIS/L grabbed the headlines, Libya also became a home to a wide array of other jihadist groups like AQIM, Ansar Al-Sheria in Libya and their affiliates (Gartenstein-Ross et al, 2015). These groups in different parts of Libya generally have focused on establishing camps for training, recruiting and planning attack.

AQIM was already in the region. Ansar al-sharia in Libya was formed in 2012 in Libya. However, the main threat to the survival of the state is ISIS/L. ISIS/L comes to Libya to form its robust network in Africa. The first Libyan city where IS's presence started to garner international attention was Derna, where the Islamic Youth Shura Council first announced its support for IS in June 2014. A high-profile attack that IS carried out in Libya in early 2015 were the slaughter of 21 Egyptian Christians, beheading and shooting of 30 Ethiopians on 20 April 2015, the attack on five star Corinthia Hotel in Tripoli, killing nine, and in the town of Qubba (under Dignity) killing at least forty people (Gartenstein-Ross et al, 2015). There are also other attacks on the neighbouring states. The aim of these and other attacks were for ISIS to be regarded as supreme terrorist group in Africa especially over Al-Qaeda by attracting Al-Qaeda affiliates and others. Its other purpose was to dissolve the Islamist Dawn coalition by provoking non-Islamists like Egypt, Ethiopia and neighbouring countries against it. Because from the fragmented Dawn, though called Islamist which in fact comprises several sets of interests, IS might get affiliates.

Unlike Ethiopia which still remains silent, Egyptian fighter jets conduct a series of strikes against alleged Islamic State positions in Derna, in retaliation for the slaughter, just one day later.

Forced by the global counter-ISIS coalition attack pressure in Iraq and Syria the group's force, and leaders with their family has been escaping to the stateless Libya where it has already established the 'Islamic State's Tripoli Province' controlling regions surrounding Sirte. This ISIS newly formed state in Libya, besides Sirte, it controls 260 kilometers (about 160 miles) of the Libyan coastline, cutting off the east-west coastal road" (Ibid: 48).

Smugglers, like terrorists, are using Libya as a centre and destination for their different illicit trade activities from human trafficking to drug trafficking and from firearms to contraband smuggling. These region destabilizing activities became more complicating not only due to the porous nature of borders in the region, but also the active participation of terrorist groups in the trafficking to buy weapon with the income from it (GIATOC, 2015).

Organizations like the AU and UN has been closely following the crisis. Mainly after the outbreak of bloody civil war between the two rival governments since 2014, both organizations are seriously trying to end the crisis. The first UN sponsored peace talks officially opened in the town of Ghadames, Libya on 29<sup>th</sup> September 2014 (Smith, 2014). It was succeeded by another two round talks that took place in Geneva in January 2015. Continued efforts of UN bore fruit on 17<sup>th</sup> December 2015 when different political factions signed the Political Agreement in Skhirat, Morocco on which the Government of National Accord (hereinafter GNA) was formed (Security Council Report, 2016). This UN backed New Libyan government formed under Fayeze Serraj, who became the Prime Minister (Blanchard, 2016). The government and its head entered Tripoli from their former base of Tunis, on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2016.

However, the success of the new government is under question mark since more than half Tripoli based GNC government, including its Prime Minister and other authorized politicians, some of the HoR and others factions are opposing it of not inclusive nature and power given to it. These groups were warning the government not to come to Libya from Tunisia.

Libya is at absolute risk. Though it generally seems that the problem in the state is the existence of two alternative institutional frameworks, the situation on the ground is much more fragmented. Currently, Libya is divided under four major powers of Operation Dignity, Operation Dawn, Tuaregs and ISIS/L.

What clearly shows the existence of Libya at a crossroads are:- on one hand, if the new government succeeded in forming a new state, the GNC which is made up of different islamists and radical groups, is about to dissolve. On the other hand, if the UN backed New Libyan government, as it was not inclusive, failed the former crisis will continue.

## **WHY DID LIBYA FALL IN TO CRISIS AFTER GADDAFI?: ANALYSIS**

The Centre is weak, while some peripheries are empowered in Libya. This current Libyan crisis is to a large extent the result of the essential struggle over political, military, institutional, or economic power and competing visions of the future of post-revolution Libya.

Most of the time, the current instability in the country is related with the 2011 popular revolution, and said to be the continuation of it. But there are also the pre and post revolution factors that turned the country into political, economic and social crisis.

### **Internal Factors**

#### **Legacies of the Gaddafi Regime**

Post-revolution political, security as well as economic crisis of Libya which related with the weak institutional capacity, lack of democratic experience, mutual suspicion among tribes, and poor security personnel and institutions, non-diversified economy and absence of private ownership and others all have their roots in the previous government which centered only on the survival of the regime, not the 'State'.

During the reign of Gaddafi a favour based on allegiance and the marginalization of educated people for the sake of regime survival resulted in current Libya's lack of experienced and trained civil service to manage and administer governance. Gaddafi who claimed his regime was based on popular will (Jamahiriya) systematically suppressed civil society and independent media, prohibited the establishment of political parties, and created a web of unelected bodies and informal power structures. In an effort to maintain control, Gaddafi pursued a divide and rule policy, sowing the seeds of hostility and distrust by provoking community against community, tribe against tribe, and region against region.



Today Libya's regular army is a largely hollow force, kept extremely ill equipped, poorly trained, and deliberately weak and underfunded by Gaddafi who feared its potential for coups. Using his first-hand experience with how a national army could threaten a regime, Gaddafi carefully and strategically kept the role of the formal security institutions (the police and the national army) to a minimum. Police were tasked with civilian security functions but were structurally disempowered and ill-equipped. Leadership was also frequently rotated in order to prevent a professional ethic from developing. In his ideology of *Jamahiriyah* or 'mass-ocracy' Gaddafi attempted to create a stateless society in which ordinary citizens would be able to manage their own affairs without the intervention of state institutions. He therefore supported the creation of the 'People's Militias', in which ordinary men and women would be in charge of defending their own country. The former minimum role of the army further eroded after failing in its interventions in Chad, in its efforts to prevent US bombardments in 1986 and attempted coups d'état between 1993 and 1995 (Martinez, 2014).

### **Weaknesses of the NTC and GNC**

NTC, a body which ruled during the revolution and in the ten months that followed, was succeeded by the GNC, which ruled from the 2012 election to the June 2014 election as interim government.

Since the NTC is essentially a self-appointed body, it has been open to questions about how its members are selected and what authority they have to govern. This has caused problems with various local groups and armed brigades who were dissatisfied with their representation, or disputed the NTC's authority over them. Although it had members from all regions, NTC was led predominantly by leaders from the east. A powerful group consisted of former officials from the Gaddafi regime who had defected from eastern Libya. For instance NTC's leader, Mustafa Abdel Jalil, and rebel military leader Abd al-Fattah Younis are from the east (Salem and Kadlec, 2012). Women were also underrepresented in the government.

Post-2011 instability was on the other hand caused by interim government's failure to implement the DDR program effectively. The program was prepared to help them to monopolize use of force within state borders and the people. The UN estimated that, at the time of Gaddafi's overthrow, Libya's armed forces held between 250,000 and 700,000 firearms, the majority of which (70–80 percent) were assault rifles given to the rebels by Qatar, France, and other countries; and most importantly from Gaddafi's weapon stock (Chivvies and Martini, 2014). MI6 estimated that there was a million tons of weaponry in Libya, more than the entire arsenal of the British army. "Immediate postwar estimates showed some 120,000 rebels in need of DDR, but within months that number had ballooned to more than 200,000, nearly 11 percent of the country's estimated workforce of 2.3 million" (Engel, 2014:5).

Basically, it was understanding its necessity that Abdul Raheem Al-Keeb's interim government began to carry out DDR program of incorporating these fighting units within state institutions. According to the program, the large majority of the armed groups have been incorporated into two umbrella coalitions, the Libya Shield Force (LSF) and the Supreme Security Committees (SSC), which were established as transitional security forces (Engel, 2014). But problems soon occurred. The NTC had no reliable military forces from Libya or international organization to implement it. Then the government offered to rebel leaders to disarm or cooperate more actively. As registration started 148,000 youths registered. Of these some need to be integrated to regular armed forces; some to join the border police, some to be the oil guards, some civil-service jobs and the remaining wanted to start their own businesses (Chivvies and Martini, 2014). The absence of strong bureaucracy to augment these and the difficulty of identifying these young whether they are veterans or not also further complicated the process. Again, militias incorporated also act with a high degree of autonomy. Some pursue

agendas that are ideological and political; others have outlooks that are local, individualistic, and occasionally criminal. This related with the TNCs idea of Group Integration. In relation to this, the transitional government also largely to be blamed for the ‘militiazation’ of Libyan society, as it pursued a policy of subsidizing militias due to depends on militias to provide security (Samuels, 2014). Its strategy of funding and funneling militias into semi-state forces such as SSC (auxiliary police) and LSF (auxiliary army) has sown the seeds of ‘warlordism’ (Wehry, 2012).

Libya’s borders were so long and porous. The NTC and GNC proved unable to exert even a small amount of control over the population and failed to protect Libya’s territorial integrity. “Since the post-revolution collapse of central authority, Libya’s 2,500 miles of land borders and 1,250 miles of sea borders have remained porous or easily passable” (Michel, 2014:3). As a result part of the state became a hub of terrorists and illegal traffickers.

NTC and GNC have less commitment to good governance. The lack of transparency on public spending, and corruption due to deliberate mismanagement of funds and also financial errors caused by an unsophisticated and disorganized administration brought doubt on their administration. Funds lost to corruption and poor administration. “Libyan-Swiss banker and anticorruption crusader Abdul Hamid al-Jadi claimed that “if corruption was 100 percent [before the revolution], then it is now 110 percent”” (Borzou, 2014: 6). Neither the NTC nor the TNG has been effective in communicating plans, visions, or accomplishments to the public, and there was confusion over the responsibilities and authority of local councils.

NTC has been maintaining the pro-Arab status quo and not making sufficient efforts to include Libya’s ethnic minorities like Toubou who were marginalized under Gaddafi. As was shown during the 2012 election barriers exist to full political participation: many ethnic minorities, who do not have citizenship cards or family books, cannot run for political office. That is why ethnic groups like Toubou refused to disarm (Tracey, 2012).

NTC formerly promised to provide constitution to the people within a year after Gaddafi. Moving no tangible step forward it passed the task to GNC. GNC pass the electoral law that would enable elections of the drafting committee. After approval drafting committee were elected in the early 2014 (Chivvies and Martini, 2014). With the broke out of the 2014 civil war their move was trapped.

### **Cleavages or Divisions in Libya**

Libyans, triggered by common causes for common goal of removing an undemocratic Gaddafi regime and establishing new democratic government by the so called ‘February 17<sup>th</sup> Revolution’, fought together leaving aside their differences. This unity, however, soon banished as the competition for power started following the removal of Gaddafi in October 2011.

Though the country’s divisions are often described as primarily pro-Dignity and pro-Dawn, they in fact reflect several deeper divides, including regional, ideological, ethnical and tribal, and, as well as a clash between so-called revolutionary and counter-revolutionary forces or old and new order.

Under the pressure of militia GNC passed the PIL in May 2013. This law disappointed Gaddafi officials who are currently in power since they are about to relinquish their position and lose their job after this Islamist planned law. After sometime, Haftar, victim of the law, called for the end of the incumbent Islamist dominated government in the mid February 2014. In May he started attacking Benghazi by his anti-islamist Operation Dignity campaign. This gave an opportunity for those who were disgruntled with the government, including the victims of Degaddafication law to be

organized under it. The results of the June elections became a blow to the Islamist coalitions in the body. Although elections took place and the HoR was internationally recognized as having replaced the GNC, the GNC reconvened and extended its mandate to continue operating and govern the country. Moreover, the GNC government allied with other Islamist and jihadists which finally resulted by the creation of the new strong faction called Operation Dawn. This left the country to be under two centers of power which has been fighting serious wars by using their advantages of international recognition of Dignity and military power superiority of Dawn.

The second division is between Secularists and Islamists based on ideology. Islam is the main religion in Libya with more than 97% of the country's populace that follows it. During the 2011 Libyan February 17<sup>th</sup> Revolution Islamists played an important role, though they may have not been the forerunners of the uprising. After change of the regime Islamists in Libya have also been an integral part of the democratization process, including electoral competition, civil society activities and others. Following the election the division of secular and Islamists clearly continued. National Force Alliance Party assumed the leadership as a more secular and modern nationalist movement, although it did not renounce the importance of Islam in its program. In the midst of this, Islamist leaning militias controlled the legislative body, the GNC, and enforced it to pass PIL in 2013 to remove Gaddafi's secular personalities in GNC for the current government and every position elsewhere. The enforcement of the law reduced the number of seculars in the legislative body giving the chance for Islamists to dominate it. Then a civil war broke out between them. That is why the post-2014 civilwar is sometimes considered as the war between pro-HoR seculars and pro-GNC Islamists.

The 'Old' and the 'New' was also other division. The 2013 Islamist militias control of the GNC and the adoption of PIL have direct relation with this rush to remove the old in the parliament and to replace with the new. The new authorities repeatedly have insisted on distinguishing between those who have 'blood on their hands' and who should be tried and punished, and those who do not. Following these policies the old who were frightened by their position and victimized by it join the newly formed Operation Dignity faction. So, including the founder of the group Haftar, those who are on the side of secularist are ex-officials of Gaddafi. This earned them the new name 'Old Block'.

The current division also sometimes considered as between Revolutionary and Counter-revolutionary. A faction called revolutionary and counter revolutionary was magnified mainly after the issue of PIL of 2013. Before that it was sometimes, though not officially, shown taking geographic hostilities between Zintan and Misrata. Misrata and Zintan correlates heavily with opposing rival groups in the major conflict in Libya, like between the so-called Islamist Operation Dawn and nationalist Operation Dignity or revolutionary and counter-revolutionary factions respectively (Gartenstein-Ross & Barr, 2015). The root of hostility, however, dates back to Gaddafi's era. During the Gaddafi era, the Zintanis maintained close ties with two tribes, the Warfalla and the Qadhadhfa, that were closely allied with the regime. As such, Zintan was long perceived as a regime stronghold. After the war the rivalry between the two cities re-emerged, fueled by Misratan accusations that Zintanis colluded with the Qaddafi regime during the war, and that the Zintanis failed to bear an equal burden in the conflict. Misratan and Zintani forces tried to claim as much territory as possible in Tripoli, carving the capital into rival strongholds. Moreover, Misratans maintain that their uprising was organized and led independently by the Benghazi rebel leadership and that they suffered the heaviest toll in resisting regime attacks; by the same token, Zintanis argue that they led the fight for the western mountains and for Tripoli (ICG, 2011). This was exacerbated by the issue of the Degaddafication Law and the emergence of Haftar's group.

## **Ethnicity**

Libya is a tribal society, with its 140 tribes though only 30 tribes or so carry significant political influence. The tribal composition of Libya is both complex (Bell & Witter, 2011). Libyans divided in accordance to ethnic identity as Arabs, Amazigh/Berber, Tubu and Tawargha.

The Arab tribes, who descended from Bani Hilal and Bani Salim tribes, were brought with their families from the Arabian Peninsula (through Egypt) by the Fatimid rulers in the 10th century to assist in containing the Berber resistance. Currently they inhabit in Tripoli, Benghazi, Misrata, Zawiya, Sabrata, Khums, al-Bayda, Darna, Tubruq and other smaller villages and settlements along the coast and in the interior (Temehu, 2013). The Amazigh/Berber are native populations and they are mainly concentrated in the western part of the country, in the coastal areas of Zuwara and in the Nafusa/Western Mountains. The Tuareg are an Amazigh/Berber nomadic pastoralist groups who are also found in neighboring countries like Nigeria, Niger, Chad, Algeria, Burkina Faso and Mali other than Libya. The Tubu are black indigenous tribes located in southern Libya, also found in neighboring countries like Chad and Niger. Others are Tawargha, who originate from black Africans who were brought to Libya and settled in the east of Misrata following their emancipation.

Besides this ethnic identity, Libyans are more known for their divisions into Cyrenaica, Tripolitania, and Fezzan based on their geographical location. These three provinces merged under the name Libya under Italy in 1912. During this rule, however, the three were separate and autonomous. That is why many agree that Libyans came together as a united country only in the 1950s. So when speaking of Libya, it is important to recognize that the country, as an integrated administrative, economic, and political reality, has a very short history. Besides, the short time of togetherness as a united states, ethnic and regional differences and hostilities the problems were further aggravated by unequal and separate treatment. This created tension that later escalated into skirmishes. For instance, in addition to the rivalry between Zintani and Misratas, the two key role players in the post-2014 two government civil war, there was a conflict in the post-revolution period in the southern part of the country (Toubou / Touareg against Arab tribes); around the Jabal Nafusah (e.g. Zintani against the Mashashiya); in the coastal plain (e.g. Berber vs. Mahâmîd or Wrishfâna vs. Zawiyah); and around Misratah (Misratah vs. Warfallah and Misratah vs. Tawurgha). But all these conflicts are not rooted in only one cause. To elaborate, there are some conflicts over the control of trade routes, old troubles between the tribes loyal to the Ottoman rulers, who were sometimes used as taxmen, with the others and an intentional act of Gaddafi like settling one ethnic group on the land of natives (Pusztai, 2014).

### **External Factors**

#### **Lack of External Assistance**

NATO's intervention in Libya, as was described by NATO's secretary general Anders Fogh Rasmussen, was one of the most successful in its history. It was successful in several important respects; for example, toppling Muammar Gaddafi's 42-year-old regime without the deployment of ground forces, with very low levels of collateral damage, and no NATO casualties. This alliance ended its warfare in Libya on 30 October at 11:59 PM (Borghard and Pischedda, 2012).

Despite its positive side in defending the civilians from Gaddafi's attacks, the alliance has been going out of its mandate. The activity of NATO that left several countries enforcing Resolution 1973 open to criticism regarding their double mission and clandestine agendas were supplying arms to the NTC rebels despite the UN-authorized embargo. This action has contributed its share in the proliferation of weapons in the country.

NATO's immediate withdrawal from Libya leaving the difficult task of security and nation building to a rather

inexperienced NTC was its weakness. No peacekeeping or stabilization forces were deployed after the civil war. In general, the international footprint in Libya would be very limited, by historical standards.

### **Military Intervention**

From the beginning, Algeria, Chad and Niger supported Qaddafi to different degrees and their initial relations with the NTC were tense, while countries like Egypt, Tunisia and Sudan supported the revolution and the NTC to varying degrees. The role of regional external powers which was very less in the first three post-Gaddafi years revived in 2014 when two major rival groups formed. Egypt, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Saudi Arabia, Chad and Niger are emerged Pro-Dignity. Countries like Qatar, Sudan and Turkey support the Operation Dawn. Algeria and Tunisia are more neutral, and facilitate dialogue for peaceful resolution of the conflict. Of pro-Operation Dignity countries Egypt's interests are both ideological and security. Chad and Niger are to relax the crisis. The remaining two, the UAE and Saudi Arabia, fear the Brotherhood as a vector of 'Democratic Islamism' in GNC that could threaten their own absolute monarchies. Pro-Dawn supporters Qatar, Sudan and Turkey, have been active in supporting the post-Arab spring expansion of the Brotherhood and its allies. Without shipping arms to Dawn militias, they did not actively involve in Libyan case as pro-Dignity do (ICG, 2015).

More than alleged provision to Operation Dignity with training, ammunition and intelligence, the crisis in Libya was intensified by the military intervention of the UAE and Egypt. The Post-revolution Libyan crisis saw the direct military intervention of foreign powers when the United Arab Emirates jets made covert strike missions against Libyan Dawn targets around Tripoli in August, operating with their in-flight refueling support aircraft from an Egyptian air base (Gartenstein-Ross & Barr, 2015). One day after the broadcast of a video of the assassination of 21 Egyptian nationals, Egypt conducted air attacks using F-16 fighter jets against IS elements in the eastern city of Darn a on February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2015. Once again Egyptian aircraft attacked Ansaral-Sheria, a pro-Dawn Islamist group, around Benghazi on behalf of Operation Dignity in October. Moreover, supplying the pro-Dignity Libyan Air Force with additional MiG-21 fighter aircraft; allowing the Libyan Air Force to accept delivery of at least four Russian Sukhoi Su-30 long-range multirole combat aircraft via Egypt; and lifting the embargo on arms sales to Libya to the benefit of the Tobruk government, insisting on the need to build the capacity of Libya's national army to combat terrorism, Egypt was supporting the Tobruk government (Reeve, 2015). Ignoring peaceful resolution, Egypt's military action was a signal to the main belligerents competing for political power that the current crisis could be addressed by military means.

### **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Disproving the idea of the 'Arab Exception' in which Arab rulers and a good part of the Arab elites have themselves promoted that Arabs were a particular people with a distinct culture that should not be corrupted by Western ideas or infected by others seeking to mold their history, Arab revolution broke out in 2011. Unlike neighboring states where the movement washed out dictators like in Tunisia and Egypt, almost after half a decade, Libya is in the crisis. The security vacuum following the death of Gaddafi paved the way for different actors to act independently with the absence of a strong central government.

The inability to handle the transition into a new chapter of political system immersed Libya into such a socio-economic, political, and security crises. This happened and worsened due to different internal and external factors. As of the conducted work, root causes of post-Gaddafi crisis in Libya are attributed to pre and post-revolution dynamics like

weak institutions inherited from Gaddafi, the failure of Disarmament, Demobilization, and Rehabilitation programs, adoption of the Political Isolation Law (Degaddafication Law), ideological and geographical differences, ethnic cleavage, the lack of external help during transition and neighboring states military intervention and others. Since the outbreak of the revolution the role played by AU was not out of criticism as 'African Solution for African Problem' was not seen. The UN, on the contrary, has been playing the leading role from the beginning of revolution to today. One of the major successes of the UN in peace talk was the formation of a new UN-backed Libyan Government, which is an interim government formed to manage and oversee the resumption and completion of the disrupted transition from interim leadership to a constitutionally established elected government, on 17 December 2015. GNA was formed under Prime Minister Fayeze Serraj. From its former base, Tunis, Tunisia the GNA ministers entered Tripoli, Libya on 30<sup>th</sup> of March 2016.

The formation of new externally imposed government has not contributed, as expected, to solve the crisis. This is because the meeting held to form this government was not inclusive from the beginning. Selection of ministers or power distribution was also not fair and is not equally representing multi-faceted sects and groups in the country. Politicians including the Prime Minister of the GNC government, different tribal and religious leaders are against the new government. GNC members and its different factions as well as some of HoR supporters are opposing it. The entry of the government of Fayeze Serraj to Tripoli in March 2016 increased the tension. This division among Libyans, on the other hand, enabled ISIS to get the submission of those factions who opposed the new governments. Unless the new UN-backed Libyan government of Fayeze Serraj is reviewed and those who are against it are appeased the lasting peace in Libya is difficult to anticipate.

Relying on the finding of the work, the author has recommended the following points as the way out for Libya.

- The UN in cooperation with other international stakeholders, like the AU, Arab League, and EU, should review the makeup and power of the new UN backed Libyan government, and make power divisions fair so that all factions can be satisfied.
- The new Government of National Accord with the help of the UN and others should recruit armies or militias and send them without delay to fight, stop and even retake territory from ISIS until unified national-level security institutions can be established.

#### **The Medium and Long Term Actions for Sustainable Peace and Stability**

- The new Libyan government should start a state re-building process in a democratic way with advice from the UN and AU, modifying if not the wholesale repealing of the Political Isolation Law (PIL).
- The new Libyan government should carefully re-apply the Disarmament, Demobilization, and Rehabilitation program with the help of the people, the UN, and other stake holders.
- The new Libyan government should form a new mixed national military force focusing on their performance, status and above all geographical representation.
- The government that would assume power after the general election should rule treating the three regions fairly and equally.

T

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